



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Tranquility? Not In This World

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

After twenty-two turbulent years, which included being on the run from Eisav, trying to stay a step ahead of Lavan, and numerous other trials, Yaakov finally returned home hoping for a life of peace and tranquility. This, Rashi explains in one approach, is the meaning of the first words of our Parsha – “Vayeishev Yaakov – And Yaakov sat/dwelt” – meaning, he desired to sit and dwell in peace. Rashi goes on to explain that the ensuing distress in losing Yosef was actually a response to this hope for tranquility – “Is it not enough for the righteous that they should rest in the next world, but they seek rest in this world too?”

At first glance, the response to Yaakov’s desire for a tranquil life seems inappropriate. We can safely assume that Yaakov was not hoping for a quiet life so that he can spend his days “playing golf.” Of course, Yaakov was looking for peace of mind so that he could draw even closer to Hashem! Apparently, this world is simply not the place for rest and tranquility. Rest and tranquility are attributes of the next world. While we are here, we are meant to work hard, to accomplish, to become better.

A complete understanding of what is meant when it says that Yaakov wanted to rest is probably beyond us. The message, however, is clear. We are here to accomplish and to grow. Taking time to relax and recharge is a necessary ingredient to keep us going, but is not the objective of life. So, the next time that we find ourselves wondering when life will finally get easy, wondering when the challenges will finally stop, let us remember that the challenges and the opportunities for growth and self-actualization that they provide, are the very purpose of our existence.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Yehuda said, "Take her (Tamar) out and let her be burned!" (38:24)

The Tanna Ephraim Maksha said in the name of Rav Meir, "She (Tamar) was the daughter of Shem who was a Kohen. The judges sentenced her to be put to death by burning, as is the sentence of a daughter of a Kohen who commits adultery. (Rashi)

Since Shem blessed Avraham before blessing Hashem, he lost the merit of having his descendants be Kohanim. This honor was given to the descendants of Avraham. (Nedarim 32b)

Since Shem's status as a Kohen was not transferred to his children, Tamar did not have the status of a daughter of a Kohen. If so, why should she be judged like a daughter of a Kohen?

Parsha Riddle

At what point/points during the year does the Kesones Pasim (Yosef's striped coat) get mentioned during davening?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How does this parsha help us determine the age for Bar Mitzvah?

Answer: The verse (34:25) refers to Levi as an "ish," and he was 13, teaching us that a boy becomes a man at 13.

HATORAH V' HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vayeishev* (38:6-11), the Torah relates:

Yehuda took a wife for Er, his firstborn; her name was Tamar. But Er, Yehuda's firstborn, was evil in the eyes of Hashem, and Hashem caused him to die. Then Yehuda said to Onan, "Consort with your brother's wife ..." But Onan (sinned as well) ... What he did was evil in the eyes of Hashem, and He caused him to die also.

Then Yehuda said to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up" – for he thought, "Lest he also die like his brothers." ...

Rashi explains:

For he thought etc. — that is to say, he pushed her off with a straw (i.e., he put her off with a lame excuse) because he never intended to give her to him in marriage.

For he thought, Lest he also die. She is a woman of whom it may be presumed that the men she marries will always die young.

R. Yosef Bechor Shor and R. Eliyahu Mizrahi point out that the principle underlying this interpretation of Yehuda's position is found in the Talmud (*Yevamos* 64b):

If a woman **was married to her first husband and he died, to a second one and he also died, she may not get married to a third husband.** This is the statement of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi. **Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: She may get married to a third husband, but if he also dies, she may not get married to a fourth husband.**

The Talmud subsequently rules that the *halachah* follows the view of R. Yehuda HaNasi, and Rashi's explanation of Yehuda's stance accords with this normative position that a woman who has had two husbands die should not marry a third. (A detailed discussion of this *halachah* is unfortunately beyond the scope of this article.)

Ramban, however, rejects Rashi's understanding of Yehuda's stance:

Now I do not know why Yehuda ... (would not simply) tell her, "Go in peace from my house," and why should he mislead her when she is even forbidden to Shelah, just as the Rabbis have said concerning a married woman: "Twice establishes a presumption" ... It is also unreasonable to say that Yehuda did not hear about how his children sinned against G-d, thus causing Him to deliver them into the hands of their fate, while Tamar was guiltless in their death.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was caused by tranquility.
2. I was caused by dreams.
3. I was to Egypt.
4. I was a blessing in disguise.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I caused jealousy.
2. I was a proof of death.
3. I was a sign of love.
4. I was colorful.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Esav's 400 men (We were equal to the "double's" purchase, We caused division, We were the 'Red army,' We instilled fear.)

#2 Gid Hanashe (Displaced Sinew) (I am not a sin for you rather a..., I am a limping prohibition, I was an angelic grip, The sun was my remedy.)

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